

There are only two previous records of the Black Tern from East Africa, both from Kenya (Britton 1980). A full breeding plumaged specimen labelled 'Kisumu, 30 April 1916' exists in the British Museum (Nat. Hist.) collection, and a bird in winter plumage was observed at Lake Nakuru on 30 September 1953 (Wallace 1975).

## REFERENCES

BRITTON, P.L. (ed.) 1980. *Birds of East Africa*. Nairobi: EANH.S.

WALLACE, D.I.M. 1975. Rare and unusual Palaearctic migrant birds in Central Kenya in 1953. *EANH.S Bulletin* 1975: 24-31.

D.J. Pearson, Department of Biochemistry and A.D. Lewis, Department of Geology,  
Box 30197, Nairobi

Received 30 October 1980

*Scopus* 4: 95-96, December 1980

THE GAMBAGA FLYCATCHER *MUSCICAPA GAMBAGAE* IN NORTHERN KENYA On 5 February 1978, approximately 20 km southwest of the Ura Gate to the Meru National Park, the attention of one of us (DJP) was drawn to a bird which resembled in general appearance and habits a grey Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*, but which had an arresting, repeated *chik* call, sharper than that of *striata*. The bird, viewed rather high in a large *Acacia*, appeared to have no discernible streaking on the forehead, and little on the breast. The wings appeared to be shorter than in *striata*. A similar bird was seen next day, also in acacias, at Isiolo. Both birds were in very fresh plumage, and were assumed to have been Gambaga Flycatchers *M. gambagae*, a species with which the observer was not familiar.

Much better views were obtained of another of these birds by DJP and ADL at the base of Ololokwe on 18 March 1980. This individual was watched for some time at close range in low acacia scrub, and was identified with confidence as a Gambaga Flycatcher. Again, the bird was in very fresh plumage. The upperparts were brownish grey. The tail and closed primaries were dark, but a prominent pale panel was formed by the edges of the closed secondaries, and pale fringes were visible on the tertials. There was no streaking on the forehead, and only a trace on the upper breast. The tips of the closed wings reached only the base of the tail. In some respects, the bird was rather *Ficedula*-like. Thus, the stance when perched was rather more horizontal, less upright than that typical of *striata*, and the head appeared more rounded, less peaked. DAT saw a bird, perhaps the same individual, at the same site on 7 April, when *striata* were also in the vicinity and better comparisons could be made. Lerata was revisited by DJP and A.E. Butterworth on 9 November 1980. At least three *gambagae* were seen. One viewed at close quarters was apparently an adult. It was much duller and browner looking than the spring birds, with worn flight feathers and no wing panel visible, but with traces of pale fringes still evident on the tertials. Another individual with a trace of mottling on the nape and mantle, pale-tipped wing coverts and unworn flight feathers was assumed to have been a young bird. Finally, also on 9 November, a bird was located by call in a dry river course some 5 km towards Archer's Post.

Jackson (1938) mentions only five records of this species, three from northern Uganda and two from Kenya, from Elgon and near Archer's Post. Apart from juvenile birds netted at night at the lights of Ngulia Lodge during early November 1978 (2) and November 1980 (1), we are not aware of other recent records. The Lerata observations, however, are indicative of breeding at some time between March and September 1979. The species may prove to be not uncommon as a local resident in dry woodland and wooded bushland north and northeast of Mt Kenya.

D.J. Pearson, Department of Biochemistry, A.D. Lewis, Department of Geology,  
Box 30197, Nairobi and D.A. Turner, Box 48019, Nairobi

*Scopus* 4: 96, December, 1980

Received 15 November 1980